

Amendments To the Claims:

1-10. (canceled)

11. (previously presented) A computer configured to operate as a web server comprising software modules and an expansion module, the combination providing the functions of a programmable logic controller, wherein Internet protocols are provided and used for communication between the software modules in the web server and for communication between the software modules and components outside of the web server, the server providing through the expansion module a first mechanism for implementing an automation functionality, wherein the server is enabled, via connection through the expansion module to one or more automation devices, to control at least one device taken from the group consisting of a computer numerical control device, a valve and a drive, the server further providing a mechanism to directly access the real-time communication level of a real-time Ethernet, wherein the expansion module is connected to an input/output module of an automation system and wherein the web server comprises a connection to a communication network.

12 - 15. (canceled)

16. (previously presented) The web server according to claim 11, wherein the web server is adapted for configuration and administration of the software modules.

17 - 18. (canceled)

19. (previously presented) The web server according to claim 11, wherein the expansion module comprises a connection to an industrial automation system.

20 - 22. (canceled)

23. (previously presented) The web server according to claim 11, wherein the web server comprises a connection to the Internet via a firewall.

24. (previously presented) The web server according to claim 11, wherein the web server is connected via a communication network to a web browser as a control and monitoring system.

25 - 26. (canceled)

27. (previously presented) The web server according to claim 11, wherein the web server comprises a real-time operating system.

28. (canceled)

29. (previously presented) An automation system comprising a computer configured to operate as a web server having software modules including an expansion module, the combination providing the functions of a programmable logic controller, wherein Internet protocols are provided and used for communication between the software modules in the web server and for communication between the software modules and components outside of the web server, the expansion module providing an automation functionality with connection to an input/output module of an automation system wherein the server is enabled, via connection through the expansion module to one or more automation devices, to control at least one device taken from the group consisting of a computer numerical control device, a valve and a drive, the server further comprising a connection providing direct access to the real-time communication level of a real-time Ethernet.

30. (canceled)

31. (previously presented) The web server of claim 11 wherein the expansion module is a controller of components and processes, wherein the web server includes a TCP/IP stack and wherein direct access to the real-time communication level is effected by a direct connection between the TCP/IP stack and an automation device with communication by means of a TCP/IP-based real-time ethernet protocol.

32. (previously presented) The automation system of claim 29 wherein the expansion module is a controller of components and processes, wherein the web server includes a TCP/IP stack and wherein direct access to the real-time communication level is effected by a direct connection between the TCP/IP stack and an automation device with communication by means of a TCP/IP-based real-time ethernet protocol.

33. (canceled)

34. (previously presented) A computer configured as a web server, comprising:
a plurality of software modules integrated into the web server; and
a processing unit for executing the plurality of software modules,
wherein at least one of the integrated software modules is embodied as an automation module for direct integration of an automation functionality, and wherein the at least one automation module is embodied as a regulator and/or controller of components and processes of an automation system of industrial processes, the at least one automation module includes a first connection to the components and processes of the automation system, wherein the at least one automation module includes direct access to a real-time Ethernet via a further connection, wherein a real-time Ethernet connection is provided between the TCP/IP stack of the web server and a TCP/IP stack of an automation device and is used for communication via a TCP/IP based real-time Ethernet protocol.

35. (previously presented) The computer according to claim 34, further comprises a connection to the Internet.

36. (previously presented) The computer according to claim 34, wherein internet protocols are provided for communication between the software modules and for communication between the software modules and components outside of the web server.

37. (previously presented) The computer according to claim 34, wherein the computer provides configuration and administration of the software modules.

38. (currently amended) A computer configured as a web server, comprising:
a plurality of software modules integrated into the web server, and
a processing unit for executing the plurality of software modules, wherein:
at least one of the integrated software modules is embodied as an automation module for direct integration of an automation functionality, and wherein the at least one automation module is embodied as a regulator and/or controller of components and processes of an automation system of industrial processes,

the at least one automation module includes a first connection to the components and processes of the automation system, and

wherein the at least one automation module includes a second connection for directly accessing a real-time communication level of a real-time Ethernet through the TCP/IP stack of the web server, the web server configured to communicate via a real-time Ethernet connection between the TCP/IP stack of the web server and the TCP/IP stack of a further web server using a TCP/IP based real-time Ethernet protocol.